

JOGGING, RUNNING, AND PHYSICAL FITNESS SAFETY BRIEF

LOSSES

Navy losses involving jogging, running and physical fitness for FY 88 through 92 include 5 fatalities and 210 injuries resulting in five or more lost workdays. A total of 4,299 days were lost from work. Injuries commonly involve the back, foot, knee and hand. The average time lost from work is 21 days.

BACKGROUND

A review of mishaps shows trying to get back into shape too quickly is the major cause of physical fitness injuries.

EXAMPLES

The following examples are typical mishap reports received at the Naval Safety Center:

- a. A LT died of a heart attack after jogging. He left his ship to jog .75 miles to a train station enroute to home; he collapsed on the platform.
- b. A senior chief dislocated his ankle while out for his daily PRT. He inadvertently stepped in a hole in the community courtyard at a naval housing complex and lost 21 workdays.
- c. An RM2 died of a heart attack after an exercise class at the base gym. He had been on a self-imposed weight control program.
- d. EMC felt a sudden sharp pain in his lower back and found it difficult to stand for about 30 seconds. He walked it off and started to ride an exercise bike. He stopped after 3 minutes because of pain. He sustained a lower back strain. He lost 14 days from work.
- e. SN was exercising on a nautilus neck machine and when stopped exercising. He experienced pain in his neck and had severe

headaches over the weekend. SN stated that he has worked on Nautilus equipment for four years but had no experience with the neck machine. He further stated that the gymnasium staff did not inform him how to use the neck machine. He strained his neck and lost 5 days from work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations include the following:

- a. Get a medical check-up if you have not been exercising regularly.
- b. Start slowly and gradually build up to a sustained level of performance for an effective conditioning program. Don't just run a mile and a half every six months. A complete program will develop and maintain flexibility, cardiovascular and muscular strength.
- c. Warm-up and stretch for 10 to 15 minutes before and after each vigorous workout to prevent strains and sprains. Talk to your command Physical Fitness Coordinator for ideas about establishing a program and don't overlook recommendations in OPNAVINST 6110.1D. It's an excellent source of information/
- d. Do not use alcohol prior to or during fitness training. Alcohol accelerates dehydration and reduces performance, impairs judgment and increases willingness to take risks.
- e. Drink plenty of cool water to prevent dehydration. When it's hot, schedule your activity during the coolest part of the day or exercise indoors.
- f. Jog on established jogging paths where available. When jogging, run against the traffic flow.
- g. Light colored clothing and reflective clothing (during reduced visibility)

conditions) are required while jogging on base.

h. Follow the rules that pertain to your choice of workout. For example, if you are working with free weights, be sure you have a spotter and follow the safety guidelines for weight lifting. Use of collars and a weight belt are recommended.

i. Remember the acronym **“RICE”** when an injury occurs: **R**est the sprain, put **I**ce on it, wrap something around the injury to **C**ompress it and **E**levate that part of the body. Seek medical attention if you experience any of the following symptoms: inability to move your arm or leg, a locked joint, persistent swelling, or a grinding feeling.

SOURCES:

American Alliance of Health,
Physical Fitness, Education and Recreation
1900 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

President’s Council on Physical
Fitness and Sports
450 5th St., NW #7103
Washington, DC 20001